



UPPER TROSNANT BAPTIST CHURCH

June 2017 Newsletter



“And God said... “I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.” (Genesis 9:13)

**Sunday Services at
11.00 am and 4.00 pm**

A very warm welcome to you

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Duty Deacon: Keith Fordham

Newsletter Items:

We are always happy to receive items for the newsletter. Please email items for the July 2017 Newsletter to upper.trosnant@btinternet.com by **Sunday 11th June.**

Letter from Pastor Richard

Moving Forward as a Church

As many of you know, I am reluctant to use sporting analogies, as I am well aware that not everyone cares terribly about how many goals were scored by Liverpool on the weekend, or whether Manchester United drew (again!). However, I am going to use the concept of a team (insert whichever sport you like) working together to illustrate how we, as a church can move forward together.



Most importantly, each player has to play their part. There is no room for someone to just stand around while the rest of the team rushes around. If that happens, everybody else has to work harder to make up for the one not working.

That is certainly the case in church life. We are so grateful that many people here work so hard and serve the church in so many ways. And we really do appreciate all that is done. And if I don't express my gratitude often enough, my apologies. However, we all need to make sure that we are playing our part.

A team cannot rely upon past results and think that just because they won previously, it will automatically happen again. Each game is a new opportunity. It is no good for teams in the lower divisions to say, "I remember when we were in the Premier League..." but not be prepared to work hard now to move the team back up.

It is easy for us as a church to say, "I remember when..." and look back to past blessings. Yes, we can thank God for them and

take confidence that as He has blessed us in the past, He can do it again. But we must realise that He has called us to live in the 21st century, not the 19th or even the 20th. That provides us with all sorts of challenges, and opportunities.

To be continued...

Love in Him, Pastor Richard

Pastor's Preaching Schedule for June

June 4 th	Pentecost	
	am: The Holy Spirit - Obedience	John 14 v 15 – 31
	pm: The Holy Spirit - Righteousness	John 15 v 26 – 16 v 15
June 11 th	am: The Holy Spirit - Assurance	Romans 8 v 1 – 17
	pm: The Holy Spirit - Hope	Romans 8 v 18 – 27

Church News

- It was lovely to have 36 church members, friends and guests sitting down for Teatime @ Trosnant on the afternoon of 20 May. Special thanks to Annmarie who planned such a delicious feast; to Priscilla, Anthea, Clare and Yvonne for their help in shopping and preparing the sandwiches; to Jill for her hard work serving tea; to Annmarie and Rhoswyn who sang so beautifully; to Derek, Jo, and everyone who helped with the clearing up. It was a wonderful afternoon – watch this space for the date of the next church tea...
- Pastor Richard and Annmarie are travelling down to Carmarthen for the Baptist Union of Wales Assembly on 16 and 17 June. Many from churches all over Wales will be participating in the fun day and 150th anniversary celebration on Saturday 17th. Please pray for this event, and for all who will be taking part.

Greetings from Doreen

The newspaper headline proclaimed 'May's mantra: strong and stable leadership.' These three words have become Teresa May's catch phrase – 'strong and stable.' I looked up the adjective 'stable' in the dictionary. It came up with a veritable plethora of definitions, including firm, solid, steady, secure, fixed, fast, immovable, unfaltering, constant, dependable. The definition, 'immovable', gave me some query as I recollected a statement by Bob Dylan (musician, poet and – even – Nobel Prize winner) who said, 'There is nothing as STABLE as change.'

Could a Nobel prize winner be guilty of such a contradiction in terms? This adjective STABLE deserved some investigation! So I required indefatigable Google to acquaint me with other topical comments which use this adjective. I received a fascinating selection, and I want to share three of them with you.

Robert Browning, with poetic instinct, wrote 'I trust in nature for the STABLE laws of beauty and utility... Spring shall plant and Autumn garnert o the end of time.' Of course! This expounds the STABILITY of our Christian faith, in God's promise to Noah that, as long as the earth remains, seedtime and harvest will never cease. A writer named Videk Wadhara wrote, 'A key to acheiving success is to assemble a strong and STABLE management team. (Did Mrs May discover this quotation?) Now, a team is only as good as its leader. The Bible declares, 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.'

The final quote I want to share is by Kurt Vonnegal. 'What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously, but the most daring thing is to create STABLE communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured.' There are many churches in our valley. These churches present different theologies in different styles of organisation and worship – but all true churches proclaim that God – Almighty, Everlasting, Omnipresent, Omniscient – is Our Father, and that we are His family, through faith in His son Jesus Christ.

Jesus as my Saviour, I would never be lonely again. I have proved the truth of this for many years. If Society changed in its attitude towards God, Bob Dylans comment, 'There is nothing so STABLE as change' would be spot on! Indeed, well worth the Nobel Prize!

Doreen, with love

The General Election

It cannot have escaped your notice that there is a general election coming up! The news at the moment is full of politicians from all parties telling us what they will do when they get into power, and why the others have got it wrong. As I have often said, I do not usually let people know how I vote, or how they should vote. You need to look at what each party is offering, and make up your mind. And, believe it or not, Christians come to different conclusions. There are believers in each of the main political parties.

One thing is certain, though. We need to pray for our government – whichever party is in power on 8th June. What should we pray? Here is what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy:

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Saviour, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.
(1 Timothy 2 v 1 – 4 (New Living Translation))

So, let's pray for them – that they would provide the conditions for us to live peaceful and godly lives. And that the Gospel would be able to freely go out. And let's also pray for those who are Christians in Parliament, that the Lord would be with them and strengthen them as they serve Him there.

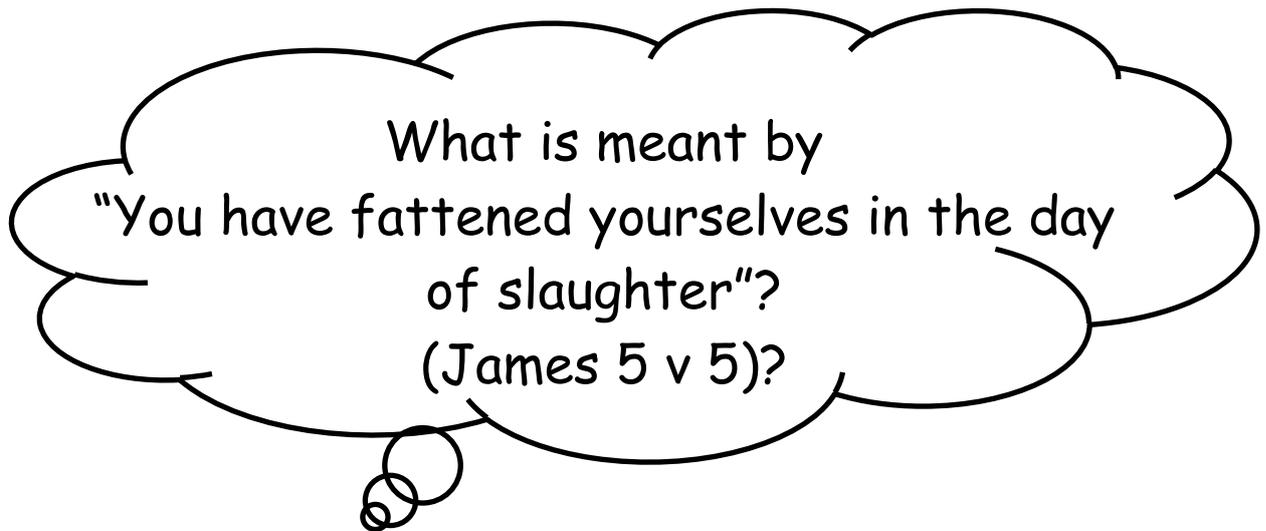
Some useful web links:

CARE UK - <http://engage17.org.uk>

Christian Institute - <http://www.christian.org.uk/election>

Pastor Richard

Ask the Pastor



This arose from the sermon the other Sunday afternoon when we were looking at verses from James 5. I had an interesting conversation with someone after the service about that very phrase.

In the sermon, I referred to those who exploit workers by not paying them. I explained that I understood that verse to refer to the fact that those who were exploiting would have to give account and, if they did not repent, would be destroyed; hence the day of slaughter. A number of commentators agreed with that.

It was pointed out to me that there could be another meaning to the day of slaughter. James had been using a farming picture. When the harvest was gathered in, there was a great celebration, and those who had worked hard were rewarded by being part of that. The "day of slaughter" was the day that an animal was killed for the celebration. The point James was making was that the workers who had put so much effort in were not rewarded as they should be, and not invited to the party. Instead, the employers ate all of the meat, and so fattened themselves.

In this case, I think that both interpretations, even though they are very different from each other, are valid.

Pastor Richard

Tools with a Mission

Most of us are familiar with recycling as we put out our bins and boxes for collection every week. Contemplating a move has caused us to wonder what to do with many unwanted items too good for the recycling bins. I was wondering what to do with, for example, my unwanted but rusty shears, saws, plane, drill, fork and spade; Audrey what to do with her excesses of material, wool, knitting needles, and sewing machine. All these kind of items could be sold if in good condition but what do you do with what is not fit for purpose at the moment? This is where an organization called Tools with A Mission or TWAM can help. Tools in any condition can be sent to third world countries having been renovated into useful articles again by teams of workers in this country. There are voluntary collectors all over the country where the tools can be taken and from where they go to depots for renovation by volunteers of suitably skilled people. A rusty old fork will be cleaned up to look clean and bright again, its broken handle repaired or replaced. A rusty old saw is cleaned and re-sharpened. Parts of power drills are made good. The pieces of cloth can be used for clothes or training purposes on the renovated sewing machine and so on – the list is endless.

In Uganda

Tools With A Mission is a Christian charity sending tools across the world. One example is Uganda. Uganda is one of the world's poorest countries with nearly 20% of its population living below the poverty line. Agriculture is the most important sector of the economy, employing over two-thirds of the work force. This is a key reason TWAM is so strong in Uganda for the need is very great.

Tools with a Mission has a long term and significant commitment to Uganda. It currently sends up to seven containers a year packed with tools and equipment. TWAM works with literally thousands of charities, churches, schools and organizations committed to improving the lives of their own people. TWAM also ship a significant quantity of charitable goods for other missions working in Uganda and supply charities sending goods out independently. Containers are shipped via Mombasa in Kenya and go overland to Uganda.

Meet Justin

Justin spent a year at Kira Farm learning construction and seeing his life completely turned around. He says: 'While I was at Kira I felt something change in me, I felt better about myself and started to think about my future. I enjoyed the praying and preaching and became a Christian.'

When he returned home with his TWAM builders kit it didn't stay in the box very long! First he built an extension to his parents' house, then he built a small house for himself and then (if that were not enough) he built two houses to rent out. His community was so impressed with his work and his seemingly limitless energy that he quickly earned a contract to build a big house. With the money Justin is making he is paying for his sister to go to secondary school. In his spare time he is the youth pastor of his local church. He says: 'My whole family looks to me to lead them.'

Justin proudly says that next year he is buying a two acre plot to farm. He also plans to set up a carpentry kit workshop and hire a couple of people to make tables, chairs and cupboards. It is easy to forget the life of extreme poverty and despair that Justin was saved from, but he does not forget as he says quietly: 'If I hadn't been to Kira I'd be very unhappy, I'd be in prison, tired of life, maybe dead.'

Justin reminds us that the gift of a tool kit is about much more than the ability to build a house; it is about giving someone the opportunity to believe that life can be better. Most importantly it is giving them the message that God loves and cares for them and wants to be involved in their life.

More details of Tools with a Mission can be found on their website: www.twam.uk

The local collector for this area is
Alan Parker
33, Ashford Close, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran, NP44 2AY
Tel:- (01633) 869 381

Eric Jones

News from the Japan Mission

Many members of Upper Trosnant pray regularly for the Japan Mission, which is led by David and Sue Verwey from their home in Ikoma, in the Nara prefecture of Japan. Look out for their newsletters that are available regularly in church. Meanwhile, here is some news from their latest letter, which can be read in full on the noticeboard in the Hall.

Thank you for the way you stand with us in prayer. We have been faced with new opportunities and challenges during 2017. It is becoming more difficult to deliver Bibles to China. Borders are tighter, and on the inside arrests, harassment and threats have become more frequent. When God closes one door, he opens another. If one raid on the delivery system causes those we work with to re-examine methods and systems, it should never cause us to give up. The God who gave Peter and Paul wisdom, strength and courage, is the same today. He is on our side and He has called us to take the Gospel to the furthest parts of the world. In the case of China, the best and most important role we can play at this time is to provide further Scriptures to the many millions still waiting for them.

Over the years workers have met hundreds of pastors and evangelists throughout China. When asking what we can do for them, without exception, the answer has been: 'Please pray for us and send us more Bibles.' Alone we are able to do so little, but together we can have a part in transforming the lives of millions of Chinese people. We can be the answer to the prayers of many by providing something of eternal value. We can hardly think of anything more exciting, rewarding or joyous than feeding the spiritually hungry and fuelling the flames of revival with continue to sweep across the nation of China. Please pray for discernment and protection for the many Bible couriers.

We stand amazed to see the many contacts that we have been able to make through the Kids' Club ministry. The wife and son of a Buddhist priest joined during December. The mother attends the English class and learns about the Bible, while her son attends Kids' Club. We were surprised to see her husband join the English class in January. Even though he is a priest, he is interested in learning about the Bible.

Please pray that God would transform the hearts of this family.

We are excited to see how the Lord is using the Kids' Club to change hearts. One missionary in the area, who sometimes helps us with Kids' Club, adopted a Japanese baby with Down's Syndrome. Some of the unsaved mothers were deeply moved when they realised that this missionary had intentionally adopted this baby with disabilities, because she knew the difficult circumstances these orphans face in Japan. Many such babies are aborted or discarded. Some of the mothers wondered: what would cause a lady to commit to a lifetime of personal sacrifice to raise a baby with disabilities in a country that was not her own? It was a wonderful opportunity to share God's love and to show how even such a child is precious in God's sight. It is exciting to see these mothers encounter Christ-centred living in action as they engage with us. Please pray that the Lord would work in their hearts as he draws them to Himself.

Recently after Kids' Club a 4-year-old boy came up to one of our teachers and asked, "You taught us last week that God created the World. Why did he decide to create everything?" The staff member was impressed by the depth of the question and how much he had been paying attention! She replied, "Because it made God so happy to have a creation to love." We have been amazed at the ways God has been revealing Himself, and how well they are receiving the truth of the Gospel. Pray with us as we continue to lead them to the source of 'Living Water'.

The Verwey family were blessed with wonderful news at the beginning of 2017. Our eldest son and his wife, Jesse and Risa, are expecting their second child in June. Our middle son and his wife, Alex and Eri who work with us in Japan, are expecting their third child in July. Please pray for safe deliveries and that the grandchildren would grow in knowledge of the Lord.

Thank you very much for your faithful prayers. May God bless you richly as you continue to serve Him together.

David and Sue Verwey

Mid-week Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

Wednesdays 7th Led by Pastor Richard

7.00 – 8.30 pm 14th Led by Jill Morley

21st Led by Annmarie Miles

28th Led by Phil Norman

Ladies' Prayer Retreat

Please join us on 6th June, when we will be led by Jacquie Maguire. Coffee is served from 10 – 10.30 am, and everyone is warmly invited to stay and share in a light lunch together.

Ladies' Fellowship Meeting

All ladies are warmly invited to an evening of conversation and fellowship over light refreshments in the Upper Trosnant Hall on Tuesday 20th June, at 7.30 pm. See Annmarie for more details.

Eastern Valley Men's Christian Fellowship

All men are invited to join us on Tuesday 13th June, when we will be visiting the Seven Corners Centre in Abergavenny. More information from Colin.

Prayer in the Vestry

Every Monday 8.45 - 9.45 am

Monday Night United Prayer Meetings in Torfaen

5th June, 8 pm Prayer for CAP, at the Lighthouse Church.

12th June, 7 pm Prayer for Youth and children's work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant.

19th June, 7 pm Prayer for Youth and children's work in our valley, at Upper Trosnant.

25th June, 7pm Prayer for Revival, at Penygarn.

Deacons' Meeting

Tuesday 20th June, at 9.30 am

Weekly Rotas

Cleaning Rota

June 5 th	Janet Jones
June 12 th	Phil Norman
June 19 th	Keith and Barbara Fordham
June 26 th	Janet and Jonathan Pollard

Sunday 4th

Flowers	Janet Pollard
Door – am	Barbara Fordham
Teas – am	Annmarie Miles
Door – pm	Ann Price

Sunday 11th

Flowers	Clare Hopkins
Door – am	Clare Hopkins
Teas – am	Clare Hopkins
Door – pm	Jill Morley

Sunday 18th

Flowers	Helen Norman
Door – am	Doreen Harrison
Teas – am	Barbara Fordham
Door – pm	Ann Price

Sunday 25th

Flowers	Rhoswyn Williams
Doors – am	Pam Charles
Teas – am	Anthea Scott
Door – pm	Clare Hopkins

Birthdays in June

3 rd	Sue D'Aloia
8 th	Nettie Shorthouse
8 th	Louise Francis
22 nd	Jordan Jones
24 th	Sue O'Shea
27 th	Jill Morley

Please Pray For...

- Pray for Pastor Richard and Annmarie as they work among us.
 - Pray for our Sunday services, that they will glorify God.
 - Pray for the work of the Gospel as it is preached in Pontypool town centre every Wednesday morning.
 - Pray for our Sunday School, especially that the Lord will raise up more helpers and leaders.
 - Pray for our organisations and meetings: the Sisterhood, the Ladies' Fellowship Meeting, the Men's Meeting, the Prayer Retreat, the mid-week Bible Study...
 - Pray for the Assembly of the Baptist Union of Wales, in Carmarthen on 16-17 June.
 - Pray for Pastor Jesse Smith and the Travellers' Church.
 - Pray for Naomi and Dale Norman in Australia.
 - Pray for 'our' missionaries Chris and Debbie Drew in Nepal.
 - Pray for all those we know who work for God, including Mike and Sue Martin, and Margaret and Roy Collins-Reese.
 - Pray for our members and friends who are prevented by age or infirmity from worshipping with us on Sundays, including Kath Jones, David Wigley...
 - Pray for those who are unwell or who are recovering from illness, including: Doreen Dixon, Jill Fryer, Audrey and Eric Jones, Alex Madden, Graham Morley, Helen Norman, Janet Pollard, Ann Price, Ron Saunders, Jo Shanahan, Ann Stephens, Greta and Derek Wagg, Malcolm Williams...
 - Pray for Audrey and Eric as they seek to move house.
- Pray for our government: that God's Will will be done in the General Election on 8 June.

QUESTION TIME

We all have difficult questions. Things we've never liked to ask... Things we think we should know already.... Things that our friends catch us out with....

- ❖ How do we know the Bible is true?
- ❖ **Is it sometimes OK for Christians to tell lies?**
- ❖ Why should I forgive someone who's ruined my life?
- ❖ **Did God create evil in the World?**
- ❖ Why are there so many different churches?

Whatever your question, however big or small, come and get it answered by the Upper Trosnant Question Time panel, on

Sunday 2nd July, 4.00 – 5.00 pm

This is a special event open to Christians and Non-Christians alike. Submit your question in advance, or ask it on the day. Anonymous questions are very welcome – just write them down and put them in the box in the Hall, or drop a note into the Church letter box. The meeting will be followed by tea, coffee and biscuits in the Hall, when there will be an opportunity to discuss any topic in more depth with the panel.

Contact Details

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